



INDEPENDENT COMMUNICATIONS
AUTHORITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

DISASTER RESPONSE SOUTH AFRICA



INDEPENDENT COMMUNICATIONS
AUTHORITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

Background	3
Primary risk concern	4
Impact of Floods In Kwazulu-Natal	6
Mitigating Factors Implemented by Disaster Management	7

BACKGROUND

After the devastating floods in KZN last month, the country was forced to face the very tangible effects of the climate emergency.

Extreme weather has continued in a stark reminder that this is one of the most significant risks South Africa had faced.

It is also a reminder for Disaster practitioners' jobs will only continue to get more difficult as risks associated with the climate emergency continue to escalate.

The issue of climate risk is the issue should be at the forefront of our agendas.



PRIMARY RISK CONCERN PER IRMSA REPORT

- One of the primary risk concerns raised in the Institute of Risk Management South Africa (IRMSA) report is associated with the inadequate response to climate change, but this was not anticipated to quickly happen in the devastating KZN floods and the severe drought in the Eastern Cape:
 - We have seen first-hand how these weather events have cascaded into other areas of risk
- One of the biggest issues we face currently is the data received and model our strategies on, which may vastly underestimate how severe climate change effects will become;
- A report compiled by the American Meteorological Society on:
 - climate change and risk management aptly calls for knowledge-based expansion or
 - increasing our understanding of the climate system to be more adequately prepared for proactive risk management.

IMPACT OF FLOODS IN KWAZULU NATAL

- The flooding has disrupted fuel and food supplies;
- Areas located close to rivers and waterways – particularly informal settlements – were severely affected and many dwellings were swept away;
- Nearly 4,000 homes have been completely destroyed and over 8,300 homes have been partially damaged;
- It is estimated that more than 40,000 people have been displaced by these floods
 - This is a humanitarian disaster that calls for a massive and urgent relief effort;
- The lives, health and well-being of thousands of people are still at risk. The floods have caused great economic and social damage;
- The Port of Durban – which is one of the largest and busiest shipping terminals on the continent and which is vital to our country's economy – has been severely affected.

Impact of Floods on the Post

1. Damage to postal offices

- 13 Buildings were severely affected by the floods.
Furniture and carpets in including boardroom and training room are severely damaged.
- Floors and roofs in the operational sorting areas are an OHSA risk because of the leaks / broken roof that was damaged during the floods.

2. Service disruptions

- Offices had to close due to unsafe working conditions i.e. a contravention to the OHSA act.
- Water shortages and power cuts hindered operational and financial processes.
- Staff shortages due to inaccessible roads.

MITIGATING FACTORS IMPLEMENTED BY DISASTER MANAGEMENT

- To ensure an effective response to these tragic events, the National Disaster Management Centre last classified the flooding as a provincial disaster;
 - This was followed by the declaration of the Premier of KwaZulu-Natal to invoke extraordinary measures to deal with the situation;
- However, given the extent and impact of the floods, the designation of a provincial state of disaster is inadequate to deal with the scale of the emergency and the required reconstruction and rehabilitation measures and responses;
- South African cabinet declared a national state of disaster;
 - This was to ensure an effective response across all spheres of government to the extreme weather events that have occurred in several parts of the country;
- The primary responsibility to coordinate and manage the disaster is assigned to the national sphere of government, working closely together with provincial governments and municipalities;

- It enables the mobilization of more resources, capabilities and technical expertise in

Thank You

